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Recovery News

ALABAMA TORNADO RECOVERY ADDS UP TO NEARLY \$9.5 MILLION

MONTGOMERY, Ala. – Six weeks after severe storms and tornadoes caused extensive damage warranting a presidential disaster declaration, nearly \$9.5 million in federal and state disaster assistance has been approved for individuals and communities in seven Alabama counties.

More than \$8.7 million has been approved for disaster assistance to homeowners, renters and business owners, according to officials in the Alabama Emergency Management Agency (AEMA) and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

These funds come in the form of grants (nearly \$1.5 million) from state and federal programs for uninsured personal losses and as disaster loans (more than \$7.2 million) from the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) which provides money for individuals as well as businesses to repair and rebuild.

Additionally, FEMA to date has approved more than \$747,400 (federal share) in Public Assistance grants for emergency work and permanent repairs to infrastructure damaged by the tornadoes in three designated counties. Under the cost-share program, FEMA funds 75 percent of the cost for eligible work by state and local governments and certain nonprofit organizations that provide public services. The state manages the grants for all projects. The remaining 25 percent non-federal share comes from state and local sources.

"This is just the beginning of Public Assistance funding, which will go on for months or, in some cases, years," said Bruce Baughman, AEMA director and state coordinating officer for the disaster recovery. "In partnership with FEMA we will continue to help communities in Coffee, Henry and Wilcox counties restore critical infrastructure and essential facilities."

Individuals in Coffee, Dale, Dallas, Henry, Jefferson, Montgomery and Wilcox counties who suffered uninsured or underinsured losses as a result of the March 1 storms can still register for disaster assistance by calling FEMA's toll-free number – **(800) 621-FEMA (3362)** – through May 2. Hearing- and speech-impaired applicants can use the TTY number **(800) 462-7585**. Applicants can also register on line at www.fema.gov.

"We encourage people who may need assistance to register as soon as possible and let FEMA determine if there are programs that can help them," Federal Coordinating Officer Gracia Szczech said.

The March 3 disaster declaration also provides for funding from FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP). This funding helps ensure that the opportunity to take critical measures to protect life and property from future disaster is not lost. Eligible applicants, including state and local governments and some private nonprofit organizations, may apply to the state which forwards applications to FEMA for review and funding. HMGP is a cost-share program, with 75 percent federal funding.

(MORE)

Below is the summary of disaster assistance for individuals as of close of business Wednesday, April 11, 2007:

- **1,888** households have registered for Individual Assistance.
- **\$1,461,447** has been approved through the Individuals and Household Program. Of that, FEMA has provided **\$1,037,171** in Housing Assistance and **\$424,276** in Other Needs Assistance (ONA).
- **\$7,251,600** in loans has been approved by the SBA for homeowners, renters, individuals and business owners affected by the severe storms and tornadoes. As of April 12, **\$6,261,800** has been approved for 127 home loans and **\$989,800** has been approved for eight businesses.
- **1,967** people visited the nine Disaster Recovery Centers.

Individual and Housing Program Funds Approved per County

County	Applications	Housing \$ Approved	ONA \$ Approved	Total \$ Approved
Coffee	1,347	635,112	352,729	\$987,841
Dale	44	70,511	4,515	75,026
Dallas	142	13,792	16,934	30,726
Henry	95	137,248	37,345	174,593
Jefferson	138	31,869	2,708	34,577
Montgomery	57	67,067	1,150	68,217
Wilcox	65	81,572	8,895	90,467
Cumulative Total	1,888	\$1,037,171	\$424,276	\$1,461,447

Disaster recovery assistance is available without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, economic status or retaliation. If you or someone you know has been discriminated against, you should call FEMA toll-free at 1-800-621-FEMA (3362) or contact your State Office of Equal Rights. If suspicious of any abuse of FEMA programs, please contact the fraud hotline at 1-800-323-8603.

FEMA's temporary housing assistance and grants for medical and dental expenses, and funeral and burial expenses do not require individuals to apply for an SBA loan. However, applicants who receive SBA loan applications must return them to SBA Customer Service Representatives or mail to: U.S. Small Business Administration, Processing and Disbursement Center, 14925 Kingsport Road, Fort Worth, TX 76155, to be eligible for assistance that covers real estate, personal property, vehicle repair or replacement, and moving and storage expenses.

For questions about SBA disaster loan applications, please call the SBA customer service line at (800) 659-2955 between 8 a.m. and 9 p.m. Eastern time, Monday through Friday or go to <http://www.sba.gov/services/disasterassistance/index.html>

FEMA coordinates the federal government's role in preparing for, preventing, mitigating the effects of, responding to, and recovering from all domestic disasters, whether natural or man-made, including acts of terror.

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Editors: For more information on Alabama disaster recovery, visit www.fema.gov or ema.alabama.gov /